

[CONFIDENTIAL.]

[No. 45 of 1875.]

## REPORT ON NATIVE PAPERS

FOR

The Week ending the 6th November 1875.

[THE *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, of the 28th October, writes the following in an editorial, entitled, "Who should have the charge of the Railways?" We do not know whether we are to rejoice or express our regret at the rumour, that the Government of India intends shortly to take the East Indian Railway into its own hands. We know from experience that the transfer of the *Government* from the East India Company to the Queen has not in any way added to our happiness. But we hope, that a similar disappointment will not be in store for us in the contemplated transfer of the Railway. Two Railway lines, indeed, in Bengal are profitably worked under the direct superintendence of Government; and the passengers also, though they do not enjoy all the comforts which might be desirable, are still free from any serious inconveniences. But in the case of both these lines, the manager is a native of Bengal. If, in the same way, Government were to entrust the management of the East Indian Railway to a competent native, it seems to us that such an arrangement would be rather beneficial than injurious to us. Even if it were indifferent as regarded the comforts of the passengers, it would nevertheless do an immense good to the country. The guarantee, which binds Government to pay the Company an interest of 5 per cent. on its invested capital, in case its profits fall short of that rate, has for a long time caused a considerable drain on the revenues of India. Under this arrangement of a guaranteed interest, moreover, the Company has been naturally grossly extravagant in its expenditure. So that in the event of the East Indian Railway being State property, there will, it may be expected, be greater economy in expenditure. Nor will the interests of passengers and merchants be overlooked under the new management; nay, the persistent attention which the present Viceroy has paid to the subject leads one to believe that there will never be found any shortcomings in this respect. It was but recently that Lord Northbrook proposed the appointment of natives to positions of responsibility in the railway service; and if Government continues to be favorable towards them, the East Indian Railway under the new *regime* will prove to be a highly beneficial institution.

AMRITA BAZAR  
PATRIKA,  
October 28th, 1875.

2. The same paper remarks, that the hostile attitude assumed by China towards England, whose Envoy was recently murdered by the Chinese, and the tardy and unsatisfactory manner in which reparation for this injury has been demanded, and supposed to be obtained by the British power, are likely to involve the two countries in a war sooner or later. This defiant attitude on the part of the Chinese, and that of tame submission manifested by England, can only be accounted for on the supposition that either England is no longer what it once was, or that the Chinese have within a

AMRITA BAZAR  
PATRIKA.



few years made considerable progress in the military art. It is, again, but too well known that Burmah acknowledges China as the paramount power; and, like her, is not favorably disposed towards England. Moreover, the gradual advance of Russia into Central Asia constrains England to keep a watchful eye on her doings in that region; while the political complications in Europe do not give much promise of continued peace. Who knows but China and Burmah are looking forward for the hastening of the catastrophe in Europe?

AMRITA BASAR  
PATRIKA,  
October 28th, 1875.

3. A correspondent of the same paper writes the following under the head of "Indigo Planters":—I was a tenant of, and worked in, an indigo factory in the Tirhoot district. Unable to bear any longer the oppressions practised on me by the manager of the factory, I have resided for the last few years in Mozufferpore. The oppressions of the Sahib having wrought a feeling of dissatisfaction in my mind, I made a tour to a large number of factories in the districts of Tirhoot, Chumparun, and Chupra, with a view to learn of the practices prevailing there. I now proceed to lay before you and your readers the results of my tour.

It is known to every one that when the *mahye* commences, the tenantry are obliged to give up their own agricultural occupations and to do this work; and it is only when this is finished that they can find leisure to reap their *bhadoi* crops, such as *maky*, *kodo*, *mamya*; and after harvesting these, they return to prepare the soil for the indigo. Many managers, however, have framed a new rule this year to the effect that no tenant will be allowed to reap his crops before the indigo fields are prepared for sowing. Every man of sense will see how this rule has been productive of injurious consequences to the people. The ripe crops are being wasted on the fields. Sir, in this year of insufficient rainfall, there is no hope of a rice crop in this part of the country, while the only means of subsistence, the *bhadoi* crops, remain unreaped on the fields. Add to this oppression, that if a person, for some cause or other, cannot attend the indigo fields at break of day, peons, like the messengers of Death itself, drag him before the Manager Sahib, where the offender, after receiving a sound flogging with the cane, is fined at the Sahib's discretion from four annas to five rupees. Owing to the oppressions of the indigo planters, almost all the people here are poverty-stricken; and, to pay the fine, are obliged to sell their utensils, and sometimes even their cloths. And thus, to gratify the avarice of the Sahibs, not a few families die from sheer starvation. I shall now inform you, Sir, of the rate of wages of the laborers. The local beegha is a much greater measure than the ordinary beegha in Bengal; at certain places the luggee measure is from  $6\frac{1}{2}$  to 10 cubits in length. In former years, the wages of labor, in gathering the indigo, were from Rs. 2 to  $3\frac{1}{2}$ , but in the present year, almost everywhere the laborers have only received eight annas a beegha. I can say from a careful examination of the matter, that a strong and able-bodied man cannot dig more than a cottah a day, the wages of which work are from five to seven pice. From the high prices that rule at present, it may well be imagined, how happily (?) a family can manage to live on this sum. Again, from this income, some *dustoory* must be paid to jemadars and other peons.

As the maids of Ravana were to Sita, and as the messengers of death are to a dying man, so the majority of the peons of an indigo factory are to the tenantry. I was one day going on some business from Mozufferpore to Motiharee. Fatigued by the heat of the sun, I sat down under the shadow of a tree, and began to converse with a jemadar, who was also



sitting there. At this time, a peon made his appearance, bringing with him a tenant who was sick, and who, being asked by the jemadar the reason of his absence from the indigo-fields that morning, piteously answered that he had been suffering from fever for five days; and seeing that he could not even rise from his bed, how could he have come? The jemadar, however, without further questioning, began to beat him. Being unable to endure his wailings, I left the place. On one day, in December, 1873, I was going eastwards from Mozufferpore, and came in front of a factory at a little distance. I there saw some respectable females, all veiled, proceeding from one village to another, by the only road, a wretched one, which lay through an extensive field. At this time, a Sahib of that factory rode up to the spot, and after dismounting from his horse near that field, and proceeding at a rapid pace, he made an effort to whip them, and ordered a servant of the factory to take off their clothes. I stood speechless, at a little distance, and learnt from inquiries, after the Sahib had gone, that the females spoken of were of the Rajpoot tribe, who at one time were famous in many countries, but who have now become so unfortunate.

The tenantry of indigo factories, in this part of the country, receive the price of prepared indigo according to three different scales; if the indigo has grown well, from Rs. 16 to 20; if not so well, from Rs. 12 to 15; and where there has been a failure, from Rs. 6 to 8. This year, the outturn has been so large, that it has never been exceeded since the establishment of indigo factories. In factories, where, in previous years, the annual outturn was a thousand maunds, this year the yield has been from 1,500 to 1,600 maunds. But it is a wonder, that, even with such a good outturn, the tenantry do not receive a fair rate of wages. Instead of paying the highest wages, as was to be expected, this year, the Sahibs have made a new rule for the last three years that, however good may be the outturn, a tenant will not be paid any thing if even a single blade of grass be found to grow on his fields.

Owing to the famine, the tenantry were not able to pay the whole of their rents last year. The Sahibs generally fix a day for the collection of rents. If these be not paid by that day, their cattle are attached and brought to the factory, and are afterwards sold to realize the arrears. An inspection of the factories at this time, will show hundreds of cattle thus collected there. This severe oppression is, in a manner, gradually obstructing all agriculture among the tenantry; and if the worthy Sahibs continue to realize their rents in this oppressive way, grim famine will ere long stare us in the face. I have said that, owing to scanty rainfall, the rice has not here grown well, nor are there better prospects of the *rubbee* crops; so that it will now be easily seen, that the chief cause of famines, in this part of the country, is the indigo factories. A fifth part of the entire cultivable area in the district of Tirhoot, Chumparun, and Chupra is under indigo cultivation; and engaged in cultivating the indigo fields, the tenantry do not find leisure to cultivate their own. I shall now dwell briefly on the manner in which the worthy indigo planters make money. For cattle belonging to a tenant, if found grazing in the indigo fields, fines are realized on the following scale:—

For every goat, from 4 to 8 annas.

For every cow, buffalo, ass, horse, or hog, one rupee.

This rule gives to many factories a daily income of two to four rupees.



Secondly ; raffles are drawn among the tenantry in order to dispose of unfit and worthless cattle belonging to the factories. In this way, an animal, which may not be worth more than 5 or 7 rupees, sometimes fetches about as many hundreds. Now what can be more unjust than this? The factory where I worked, held, under a *ticca* tenure, some two or three villages belonging to an old zemindar. The old man having one day come to the Sahib to ask for his rents, was laid hold of by the throat by his bearer and turned out of the bungalow. A few years ago, the Maharanee of Durbhunga was one day going through the indigo fields in a palanquin. The insults, to which she was subjected at this time from the jemadars and peons of the indigo factory, are known to many in the Tirhoot district ; and we hope that our Maharajah, on attaining his majority and succeeding to his raj, will not forget the disrespect thus shown to his mother. If the Rajahs of Durbhunga, Sehere, Bettiah and other zemindars, instead of letting villages to indigo planters in *ticca* tenure, were to make direct settlements with the tenantry, and undertake to grow indigo, the country would be immensely benefited and themselves greatly enriched.

EDUCATION GAZETTE,  
October 29th, 1875.

4. The *Education Gazette*, of the 29th October, recognizes the necessity of an institution like the newly formed Indian League, for representing the views and opinions of the middle classes of the native subjects. While the British Indian Association, devoted to the cause of landholders, is not to be ignored as representing important interests, there is yet ample scope and work for the operations of the new League. Its defects may be gradually removed ; and, considering how great things have often proceeded from small beginnings, we are led to hope that this movement, though imperfect, and as yet necessarily in its infancy, will be productive of immense benefit and usefulness to the people of this country.

BHARAT  
SANGSKARAK,  
October 29th, 1875.

5. The *Bhārat Sangskārak*, of the 29th October, is gratified to find that the members of the East Indian Association in England have memorialized the Postmaster-General on the desirability of reducing the postal rates regarding letters, &c., between England and India. This reasonable prayer of the Association, if granted, will be an effective means of promoting a correct knowledge of Indian affairs among the British nation ; which is at present so sadly wanting in sympathy towards the people of this country, from its ignorance of their thoughts and feelings.

BHARAT  
SANGSKARAK.

6. The same paper notices with pleasure the report of the Committee appointed to select text books for the vernacular scholarship examinations. The views of the Committee are just and reasonable. It is, however, to be regretted that, in the authorized list, there is not the slightest mention made of any works on Bengali literature.

BHARAT  
SANGSKARAK.

7. Adverting to the increase of work in the Sonapore post-office, owing to a large number of letters, newspapers, and especially the *Som Prākāśh* and the *Bhārat Sangskārak* being posted there, the same paper asks Government to appoint an additional number of subordinate officers to this office ; and, in consideration of the satisfactory manner in which the present post-master has for the last few years discharged his onerous duties, to grant him an increase of pay.

BHARAT  
SANGSKARAK.

8. The same paper observes with gratification, that Government has directed its attention to the necessity of establishing State Life Assurance Funds on behalf of natives. Naturally improvident as they are, they have become the more reckless in their expenditure, since the introduction of European civilization, and, with it, the vice of drunkenness, which is fast



eating into the vitals of native society. If Government could, by means of Life Assurance Funds, succeed in inducing them to make provision for helpless widows and orphans, an immense deal of good would be done. Some objections have, however, been raised against this noble scheme. It has been remarked, that there are no means of obtaining sufficient and correct data regarding native lives, and that a few alone will subscribe to the funds. These objections are, however, met by the consideration, that, before the proposed institution becomes really an accomplished fact, we are not warranted in predicting whether it will or will not be popular. There is nothing to show that the natives, who have accustomed themselves to so many strange European habits, will be slow or backward in availing themselves of the undoubted advantages of such an useful institution. Some difficulty, however, must be experienced, at the outset, in determining the value of native lives; and this will always continue until the subject has been fully and practically considered. The objection that the establishment of Life Assurance Societies by Government will interfere with the profits of existing institutions for the benefit of Europeans and Eurasians, is extremely futile; and has evidently emanated from selfish considerations, in utter forgetfulness of the rule, that the interest of a class should never be allowed to stand in the way of any measure of public utility. Therefore the sooner Government carries out its noble scheme the better.

9. The *Grámbartá Prakashiká*, of the 30th October, complains that a large number of judicial, as well as executive, officers have at the present time grown extremely fond of flattery and despotic power. They find ready followers; who, by solely ministering to their weaknesses, always succeed in gaining their favor, and appointments to the public service. These incompetent and, mostly, illiterate men abuse their authority and tyrannize over their fellows. Educated and competent men, on the other hand, if they are wanting in this all-important qualification of an abject submission, are not thought fit for any appointment at the disposal of these officers. Injustice is often perpetrated in this way; as also by the undue influence and use of money at the present day. Under the British Government, it is the rich man who possesses nearly all the advantages. The police is submissive to him; and even justice in law courts is, in a manner, sold to the highest bidder. The ruined and impoverished man can only weep over his wrongs, especially those arising from the expenses of litigation.

GRÁMBARTÁ  
PRAKASHIKÁ,  
October 30th, 1875.

10. The *Sádháraní*, of the 31st October, is gratified to notice that the recent meeting of the Indian League was well attended; and hopes that this greatly needed institution will live to be prosperous and useful. It seems that the eyes of the native public of Calcutta have at last been opened to the dangers besetting their municipal administration.

SÁDHARANÍ,  
October 31st, 1875.

11. The same paper thanks Lord Northbrook for directing his attention to the numerous complaints of native passengers on the East Indian Railway. By removing them, His Excellency will earn an enduring fame.

SÁDHARANÍ.

12. By inviting the Prince of Wales at this time to India, says the *Som Prakash*, of the 1st November, Lord Northbrook has acted most wisely. Timely rainfall has cooled the atmosphere, while it has helped to bring about a splendid outturn of the crops. The empire enjoys the blessings of profound peace; which, however, had at one time been threatened by the state of affairs at Burmah and China. India is filled with rejoicings and loyal sentiments. The only thing to be regretted is, that the extravagant expenditure, which is likely to be incurred by the Native Princes in connection with this royal

SOM PRAKASH,  
November 1st, 1875.



visit, will give occasion for manifold oppressions towards their subjects. The circular of the Foreign Office has been signally ineffectual in this respect.

SOM PRAKASH,  
November 1st, 1876.

13. The same paper has a lengthy editorial on, what is entitled, the Error of Government in connection with the Stevens' Commission. The appointment of this commission was a glaring mistake of Lord Northbrook's government, and evidently proceeded from a weakness on his part in giving way to the unreasonable clamour raised by the Anglo-Indian community; which is ever ready to move heaven and earth, if any of its members is even justly punished. This was seen in the case of Meares and of Stevens. The only wise course left to Government, when it was memorialized on the acquittal of Stevens, was to disregard the clamour; but it did not do so. The commission was appointed; and it now turns out that a cooly was actually murdered, and that there was nothing to suppose that a conspiracy had been got up against Stevens. While Government has thus allowed itself to be stultified, an impression extremely prejudicial to its love of justice has been created in the minds of the native subjects. It is said, and plausibly enough, that in this case the commission was appointed merely to gratify the offended Anglo-Indians; for are there not daily occurring numbers of similar cases, which never receive even a passing notice, and are soon forgotten? Will not this act of Government interfere with the independence of Judges and law courts, and will it not lead the Anglo-Indian community to attach little importance to the lives of men like Habiram, Panchoo, and others? From the fact of the relation always subsisting between Europeans and natives as the conquerors and the conquered, it may be inferred that the probabilities of committing an offence, as in the case of Stevens, are entirely against the former. It is to be hoped that Government will see this and know how to maintain its impartial and vigorous position.

SOM PRAKASH.

14. The same paper is gratified to notice that, in a recent Resolution, Sir Richard Temple has reconsidered the subject of the Native Civil Service Examinations, and has wisely accorded preference to the graduates of the University to other candidates.

SOM PRAKASH.

15. The same paper remarks, in reference to the newly-formed Indian League, that the necessity of such an institution is somewhat open to question, when it is considered that the object for which it has been established could be attained through the British Indian Association. The latter might be urged to exert itself on behalf of the middle classes, on a subject like the municipal administration of the city, which does not in any way clash with the zemindaree interests. About the permanence of the League, we have yet grave doubts. Its heterogeneous character, composed as it is of Europeans and natives, whose interests are always opposed to each other, does not inspire us with much hope as to its success. The League is therefore advised not to admit into it any other members save educated and respectable natives.

SOM PRAKASH.

16. The same paper notices, with gratification, the reports of the Committee appointed to select text-books for the vernacular scholarship examinations. It has (1) done well by prescribing the subjects and not the books, (2) preferring original works to translations, and (3) allowing considerable latitude in matter of composition in the books to be used in the schools.

SAHACHAR,  
November 1st, 1876.

17. The *Sahachar*, of the 1st November, again draws the attention of Government to the gradually increasing prevalence of fever and cholera in Konnaghur and adjacent localities. Medical aid is urgently and speedily required.



18. The same paper dwells in a lengthy editorial on the text-books selected for the vernacular scholarship examination. Sufficient attention, it seems, was not paid to the subject. Thus under the head of arithmetic, we find Baboo Khetter Mohun Bhattacharjya's "Nava Shishubodh," a book containing miscellaneous information, and prepared especially for use in the Campbell pathshalas. The worthless Bengali translation of Roscoe's Chemistry should not have been chosen at all. Again, the text-books in history by Baboo Bhudev Mookerjee and Rajendra Lall Mitter, however correct as to facts, are not, from the obsolete and old style in which they are written, fit to be put into the hands of young pupils. The Bengali language has undergone remarkable changes since those books were written. The members, though all competent men, are not known to possess any extensive knowledge of Sanskrit and Bengali. From all these circumstances, it will be seen that the object of the Lieutenant-Governor in appointing the Committee has not been fully attained. His Honor should yet, after consulting such men as Pandit Ishwara Chandra Vidyáságara and other old students of the Sanskrit College, take measures for amending the published list. There was no need of omitting the books on the elements of Political Economy, and Zemindaree and Mahajani Accounts from the list. While on this subject, we may add that the list published by the Commissioner of Assam appears to us to be the most well considered, and, as such, we would like to see that adopted for Bengal. The History of the World for the vernacular examination is an extremely ill-chosen book; the History of Bengal would be greatly better.

SANAGHAN,  
November 1st, 1875.

19. In noticing Mr. Hobhouse's Bill, for the regulation of Native Passenger ships, the same paper directs the attention of Government to the desirability of introducing a system of examination of the persons to whom their management is entrusted during a voyage. In England, the captains are all educated men, and hold certificates of their professional skill; but no such thing is found in India. Hence a very large number of casualties. In connection with this subject, it should be remarked that Government should establish a system of periodical registration and inspection of the boats plying in the rivers. This would be a highly beneficial measure.

SANAGHAN.

20. The same paper does not see the necessity of a Factory Act. It would, if passed, greatly hamper the growth of the nascent cotton industry of India, and gratify the selfishness of Manchester merchants, who, under the cloak of philanthropy, are thus really seeking to ruin the Indian trade. The laborers are all accustomed to their work, and are well content with their lot. There is no need of Government interference.

SANAGHAN.

21. A correspondent, writing to the *Urdu Guide* from Chittagong, under date the 19th of October, complains of the great diminution, under Government orders of June last, in the incomes of the rural registrars of the above district. They used to be allowed a commission of 75 per cent. on the fees collected, out of which they had to pay their own amlahs and live with their families near the office. This has now been reduced to sums varying from Rs. 45 to Rs. 25; and the incumbents, who, on accepting their posts, had given up good prospects and gone to the expense of building places of residence for themselves, now find themselves placed in a great dilemma; for if they sell their houses, they will not now fetch half the sum spent in building them. Apart from this, the Inspector-General has directed that each mohurir, or clerk, attached to the office of a rural sub-registrar shall receive Rs. 15 a month as his salary: what, then, will remain for the support of the sub-registrar and his family? The correspondent draws particular attention to the fact, that Zorawargunge, which is highly spoken of

URDU GUIDE,  
October 19th, 1875.



in the inspection report, has had the pay of its officer reduced more than any other. The inhabitants of Chittagong pray that the Government will be pleased to direct a revision of the orders recently passed in the matter of the rural sub-registration offices, allowing each office to be judged of on its own merits.

BEHAR BANDHU,  
November 3rd, 1875.

22. In continuation of his remarks on "the mortgage of land," the Editor of the *Behar Bāndhu* advises his readers to examine the title-deeds of lands carefully before making any advance of money; they should also see whether the land pays rent to Government or is held rent-free; also whether Government has made any settlement with any particular person. If so, the original documents, either in the Collectorate or Sudder Board of Revenue, should be searched for, and examined. If any transfer by sale or otherwise has been made, all particulars relative thereto should be correctly ascertained: but if it has descended to any heirs, then the certificate under Act XXVII of 1860, the *Hibahnámah*, will, or papers connected with any case in the courts, and consequent mutation of names, should be examined. In fact the successive transfers should be carefully traced down to the present proposed mortgage transaction; and if a defect be found in any of the stages, this ought to be well looked into and all doubts removed by calling for the documents and minutely inspecting them. The family genealogical chart should likewise be carefully looked at, and a certificate of a respectable vakeel obtained, to the effect that the chart is a true and a faithful one, and that the alleged proprietor has the power to sell or mortgage the property according to law. Should there be any defect in tracing the documents regularly down, care should be taken that the mortgagor has had long antecedent possession of the land.

BEHAR BANDHU,

23. The Editor of the *Behar Bāndhu* asks Government to appoint a school book committee for the preparation and selection of books in the manner recently done for Bengal.

BEHAR BANDHU.

24. This paper says that rain has not fallen as yet, nor is there any prospect of it. The paddy crop is over, and very little hope is entertained of the *rubbee*. If rain does not fall, there will be a severe famine this time; though the tracts through which the Soane canal flows, will fare somewhat better; and it is on such occasions as this that the benefits arising from works like the canal are experienced.

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,  
The 30th October 1875.

JOHN ROBINSON,  
Government Bengali Translator.

*List of Native Newspapers received and examined for the Week ending the 6th November 1875.*

| No. | Name.                      | Place of publication.         | Monthly, weekly, or otherwise. | Date.         |
|-----|----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------|
| 1   | "Amrita Bazar Patriká" ... | Calcutta ...                  | Weekly ...                     | 28th October. |
| 2   | "Education Gazette" ...    | Hooghly ...                   | Ditto ...                      | 29th ditto.   |
| 3   | "Bhārat Sangakārah" ...    | Harināvi, 24-Pergunnahs       | Ditto ...                      | 29th ditto.   |
| 4   | "Grāmbārtā Prakāshikā" ... | Comercolly ...                | Ditto ...                      | 30th ditto.   |
| 5   | "Sādhārānī" ...            | Chinsurah ...                 | Ditto ...                      | 31st ditto.   |
| 6   | "Sahachar" ...             | Calcutta ...                  | Ditto ...                      | 1st November. |
| 7   | "Som Prakāsh" ...          | Changripottah, 24-Pergunnahs. | Ditto ...                      | 1st ditto.    |
| 8   | "Urdu Guide" (in Urdu) ... | Calcutta ...                  | Ditto ...                      | 30th October. |
| 9   | "Behar Bāndhu" (in Hindi)  | Patna ...                     | Ditto ...                      | 3rd November. |

Bengal Secretariat Press.